INSTRUCTION

Maria Eleanora Giffard
Marquis
1807

AND

DIRECTIONS

FOR GAINING THE

Grand Jubilee of the Holy Year, celebrated at Rome anno 1775, and extended to the univerſal Church anno 1776, by his Holineſs Pius VI.

All you that thirſt come to the waters (of grace and life). *Seek ye the Lord, while he is to be found; call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked man forſake his way, and the unjuſt man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him.* Iſaiah lv.

O houſe of Iſrael be converted, and do penance for all your iniquities;---caſt away from you all your tranſgreſſions;---and make to yourſelves a new heart, and a new ſpirit: and why will you die, O houſe of Iſrael? For I deſire not the death of him that dieth, ſaith the Lord God, return ye and live. Ezekiel xviii.

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INSTRUCTIONS and DIRECTIONS

For gaining the

JUBILEE, Anno 1776.

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IT was appointed by the divine Law in the twenty-fifth chapter of Leviticus, that every fiftieth year ſhould be ſanctified to the Lord as a *Jubilee Year*, that is a year of reſt and remiſſion, in the way of a general releaſe and diſcharge from all debts, and all bondage, and a reinſtating of every man in his former poſſeſſions. The Holy Ghoſt, who, as Jeſus Chriſt has promiſed (S. John xiv. 16, 26. and xvi. 13), ever guides and directs his Church, has inſpired its chief paſtors to inſtitute alſo a *Jubilee Year* amongſt Chriſtians; not for the freeing them from their worldly debts, or their corporal bondage; or reſtoring them to the earthly goods they had formerly poſſeſſed; but for the diſcharge of their ſpiritual debts they owe to the divine juſtice, for looſing the bonds of their ſins, releaſing them from the ſlavery of ſatan, and reſtoring them to all thoſe goods of divine grace from which they have unhappily fallen. And all this by

virtue of the commiſſion and power given by Chriſt our Lord to St. Peter and his ſucceſſors in the office of chief paſtors of the Church, in theſe words, St. Mat. xvi. 19. *To thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatſoever thou ſhalt bind upon earth, ſhall be bound alſo in heaven; and whatſoever thou ſhalt looſe upon earth, ſhall be looſed alſo in heaven.* Which unlimited power of looſing all ſuch bonds as may hinder any one from entering into the kingdom of heaven is put in full execution by the grant of a Jubilee (attended with all proper circumſtances) in favour of all true penitents, who by the ſacramental abſolution they then receive (no caſes being at that time reſerved), are looſed from the whole guilt of their ſins, and the eternal puniſhment due to that guilt: and by the plenary indulgence of the Jubilee, are alſo diſcharged from the debt of temporal puniſhment, which (as the Catholic Church has always believed) often remains due to divine juſtice after the guilt is forgiven. See 2 Samuel xii. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

Our holy Father Pope Pius VI. who, according to the cuſtom of his predeceſ-

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ſors, granted this laſt year a general Jubilee in favour of all thoſe who during the courſe of that year, 1775, reſorted to Rome; and being truly penitent for all their ſins. confeſſed them to a prieſt duly approved, and received worthily the holy communion; viſiting for fifteen days (either continued or interrupted) the four principal Churches, and there devoutly praying for the exaltation of our holy mother the Church; for the purging of the world from errors; for the peace and concord of Chriſtian Princes; and for the general welfare and ſalvation of all Chriſtian people; has been pleaſed in the beginning of this preſent year, to open the treaſure of the Church, and to extend the like grant of a general Jubilee to all the faithful throughout the whole world; who being in like manner truly penitent, ſhould perform the like conditions in their reſpective diſtricts; not excepting from this grant thoſe who had already gained the Jubilee at Rome, or elſewhere.

The time his Holineſs has allotted for gaining the Jubilee, with all the privileges annexed to it, is the ſpace of ſix whole months, to be computed from the

day of the ſolemn publiſhing of it in each dioceſe or diſtrict: which in the diſtrict of L-----n will be on the fourth Sunday of Lent, the 17th of March. In any part of the ſpace of theſe ſix months the Jubilee may be gained. by viſiting for fifteen days (continued or interrupted) the churches appointed by the biſhop, and there devoutly praying for the intentions ſpecified above, and performing the reſt of the conditions. But it can be obtained but once in that ſpace of time. During the time of the Jubilee, all prieſts duly approved by the biſhop. for hearing the confeſſions of the faithful have a general power of abſolving from all reſerved caſes and cenſures all ſuch perſons as apply to them in order to gain the Jubilee, and of changing all vows, except thoſe of chaſtity and religion, into other pious works. And all perſons, whether ſecular or religious, of every order. inſtitute, or ſociety, are licenſed to chooſe for the confeſſion which they deſire to make for the gaining the Jubilee, and for the abſolving them from all reſerved caſes, any prieſt approved by the biſhop. whether ſecular or regular, of their own or any other order, all

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ſtatutes, laws, cuſtoms, or ordinances to the contrary notwithſtanding. And all approved confeſſors have a power of diſpenſing with clericks in any ſecret irregularity, which they may have incurred by the violation of the cenſures of the Church, or of their eccleſiaſtical ſuperiors.

They that by being abroad, or at ſea, have been hindered from gaining the Jubilee within the ſix months, may gain it afterwards, by performing the other conditions, and viſiting fifteen times the Church or Chapel of the place where they ſhall then reſide.

Now as to the conditions required on the part of the faithful that they may effectually gain the Jubilee, the firſt and moſt eſſential of all is, that they be *true pentients*, by turning from all their evil ways with their whole hearts; by renouncing and deteſting their ſins, and having a hearty ſorrow for them; together with a full determination to lead a new life for the future; to fly from all their cuſtomary offences, and the immediate occaſions of them; and ſeriouſly to do penance for their paſt tranſgreſſions. This is that great virtue of *penitence*,

tence, which ever was and ever will be abſolutely neceſſary to ſalvation for all that have fallen into mortal ſin: without it, as our Lord himſelf poſitively declares (St. xiii. 3, 5), *we ſhall all periſh.*

Hence all ſuch Chriſtians exclude themſelves from having any ſhare in the benefit of the Jubilee, as refuſe to renounce their ſinful habits of impurity, drunkenneſs, profane ſwearing, detraction, &c. All ſuch as perſiſt in the practice of uſury, extortion, oppreſſion of the poor, or of any way whatſoever of wronging or over-reaching their neighbours, either in buying or ſelling, or in any other contracts: all ſuch as will not forgive their enemies; or pay their juſt debts, or reſtore their ill-gotten goods; or put away from them the immediate occaſions of their crimes; all ſuch as continue to exhibit or frequent immodeſt ſhews or plays; all ſuch as ſlight or neglect the precepts of the Church of God, and live in habits of breaking the faſts of command, and eating meat on Saturdays or other days of abſtinence without juſt diſpenſation; in a word, all ſuch as refuſe to comply with any part of their duty to which they are obliged under

under mortal ſin. Let no man here deceive himſelf: God is not to be mocked: they that wilfully continue to be his enemies by ſin, in ſpite of his moſt preſſing calls, and all the graces he offers them at theſe times of mercy, have nothing elſe to expect from the abuſe of the Jubilee, but the judgments of heaven, inſtead of the remiſſion of their ſins. For no ſin can be remitted without true repentance, and the puniſhment due to ſin can never be remitted as long as a perſon wilfully perſiſts in the guilt of it.

The next condition required for gaining the Jubilee is, that the faithful join with the *virtue of penance* the *ſacrament of penance*, by an humble confeſſion of all their ſins to a prieſt duly approved by the biſhop, in order to receive abſolution from them. Now as to the quality of this confeſſion, it muſt be accompanied with all the conditions neceſſary for its acceptance with God; ſuch as a diligent preparation by prayer, and examination of conſcience; a hearty contrition and repentance, with a firm reſolution of a new life, and a ſincerity and integrity in the accuſation, without concealing

cealing or diſguiſing any part of the guilt, or number of the ſins.

And here it is earneſtly recommended both to penitents and their directors, ſeriouſly to conſider how far a general confeſſion of the ſins of their whole lives may be expedient, or even neceſſary upon this occaſion. For though ſuch a confeſſion of the whole life be not abſolutely inſiſted upon for the gaining of the Jubilee; and in ſome caſes might not even be adviſable, for fear of entangling timorous conſciences in inextricable ſcruples: yet as to the generality of Chriſtians, the beſt ſpiritualiſts agree, that ſuch a general confeſſion once at leaſt in life is highly expedient; and ſurely never more ſo than in the time of a Jubilee. But it is not only expedient, but abſolutely neceſſary to a great number of Chriſtians, who have juſt reaſon to apprehend for the validity of their paſt confeſſions; either through want of preparation, or want of contrition and true change of heart, or want of a ſerious reſolution of amendment; or want of ſincerity; either becauſe they have wilfully concealed their ſins, or affected to diſguiſe their guilt, ſo as not

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to be underſtood. For ſuch as theſe can have no ſecurity for their ſouls but in a good general confeſſion. And in order to perform this well, after praying to God to direct them in their choice, they ought to betake themſelves to ſome zealous and prudent confeſſor, who may not only help them in making their confeſſion, but effectually put them in the way of entering upon a new life; even ſuch a life which by perſevering therein may bring them to life everlaſting.

The third condition required for gaining the Jubilee is, that the faithful after having tried and proved themſelves, and cleared their ſouls from the guilt of their ſins by the virtue and ſacrament of penance, ſhould worthily receive the precious body and blood of Chriſt in the holy communion, in order to unite themſelves with Jeſus Chriſt, ſo that henceforth *they may abide in him, and he in them*. St. John vi. 57. Where note, that children, who have not yet been admitted to the holy communion, may nevertheleſs partake of the grace of the Jubilee, becauſe their confeſſors are authoriſed to change in their regard the

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condition of communion into ſome other devotion ſuitable to their capacity.

The fourth condition required for gaining the Jubilee is viſiting certain churches, appointed by the biſhop, for fifteen days; and there devoutly praying for the intentions preſcribed by his Holineſs, viz. for the bleſſing and grace of God upon the whole ſtate of the Catholic Church; for bringing back all ſtraying ſouls to the ways of unity and truth; for peace between Chriſtian Princes; and the general welfare of all Chriſtian people both for time and eternity. But as the circumſtances of Catholics here will not allow them to viſit four different Churches for fifteen days, according to what is regularly required in other countries, we are licenſed to reduce and regulate theſe viſits, and change them in ſuch manner as the ſtate and condition of the faithful in this diſtrict will admit of.

Wherefore inſtead of viſiting four Churches for fifteen days, and offering up prayers in each of them for the intentions above-mentioned, it is allowed in this diſtrict, that the faithful, both in town and country, may obtain the benefit of the Jubilee, by viſiting any one chapel.

chapel, public or private, for fifteen days, continued or interrupted; and employing there, at each visit, about half an hour in devout prayer for the remission of their sins, and the intentions of his Holiness specified above: and that where the circumstances of person or place will not suffer them to visit so often any chapel or place of worship, they may gain the Jubilee by performing these devotions at home, for the like space of fifteen days. It is also allowed that these devotions may be reduced and abridged in favour of the sick, or others, who are not able to perform them; at the discretion of their pastors or confessors.

As to the particular prayers to be offered to God for the intentions of the Jubilee, they are left to every one's choice. They may say such as suit best with their devotion, the litanies, or penitential psalms, or rosary, or any other approved prayers; or without any form of words may pray mentally: only they must take care to direct their prayers for the intentions above specified.

As to the order to be observed in performing the conditions prescribed for gaining

gaining the Jubilee, it is left to each one's diſcretion, whether they will make their confeſſion and communion before or after the other devotions. But it is certainly moſt adviſable to begin with repentance and confeſſion; that ſo their prayers, being performed in the ſtate of grace, may be more acceptable to God, and more beneficial both to themſelves, and to their neighbours. And ſpecial care muſt be taken that they be in a ſtate of grace, at leaſt when they are concluding the devotions of the Jubilee; otherwiſe they deprive themſelves of the benefit of it.

It remains that we ſhould all give ear, upon this occaſion, to the admonition of the Spirit of God, ſpeaking to us by St. Paul, 2 Cor. vi. 2. *We exhort you that you receive not the grace of God in vain: for he ſaith: In an acceptable time I have heard thee: in the day of ſalvation I have helped thee. Behold now is the acceptable time, now is the day of ſalvation.* It is now that we are all ſummoned by the vicegerent of Chriſt, in the name of Chriſt himſelf, to turn from all our evil ways, and to be converted to the Lord with our whole heart. It is now that all the

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treaſures of heaven are laid open in favour of thoſe that hearken to theſe ſummons. Now all paſtors, preachers, and confeſſors are called upon to exert themſelves in preaching true penance by word and example, to all the faithful: now they muſt cry out without ceaſing to all ſinners, and put them in mind of their manifold debts to divine juſtice; and of the judgments which they have reaſon to apprehend are hanging over their heads, and will quickly fall upon them, if they do not in a proper manner lay hold of the mercy offered them at this time. Now the prieſts of God muſt proſtrate themſelves before the altar, to beg for themſelves, and for all the ſouls committed to their charge, that true penitential ſpirit, which has ſo often produced in the time of Jubilees ſo many remarkable converſions of ſinners, and ſuch as have been atteſted by the entire change of their lives. Now alſo all the people of God muſt join in prayer for the ſame great end, and beg that Grace for all the world, that no one may neglect or paſs by this time of mercy and ſalvation. Thouſands will never have the like opportunity again: and thoſe

that neglect the preſent offer of mercy, have reaſon to apprehend they ſh. ll dearly repent it when it is too late.

As to the reſt, for the benefit of as many of the faithful as deſire to ſpare no pains to ſecure to themſelves the grace of the Jubilee, we have reprinted the *thirty meditations* firſt publiſhed on occaſion of the grand Jubilee in 1751; in order to determine the Chriſtian ſoul to turn from ſin to God; and to fix her in a happy reſolution of dedicating herſelf henceforword in good earneſt to the love and ſervice of her maker. With which we have joined ſome other prayers and devotions, proper to be recited in the time of Jubilees, or other Indulgences, which we recommend to the faithful on the preſent occaſion.

We ſhall only add, that the faithful ſhould not ſeparate on this occaſion faſting, and alms according to their ability, from their other performances. For though theſe are not expreſsly preſcribed in the grant of this Jubilee, yet being the regular attendants of penance, and the moſt powerful means of obtaining mercy, they ought not to be neglected in this time of penance, in which we are ſuing for mercy.

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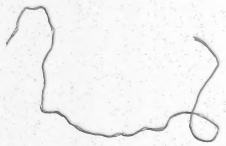
As the extenſion of this grand Jubilee of the holy year, is deſigned by his Holineſs for all the faithful throughout the world, who ſhall comply with the conditions ſpecified in the grant: we take this occaſion to notify the ſame to the Catholics of the Britiſh Weſt India Iſlands, and of the Colonies of North America: to the end that their paſtors may diſpoſe and prepare them to welcome ſo great a grace: That they may alſo appoint for them the ſix months for the gaining the Jubilee; and inſtruct them in the manner of performing all the requiſite conditions; regulating their fifteen-days viſits and devotions, as they ſhall ſee we have done here for the L-----n diſtrict; and changing into other good works, or diſpenſing with what part of theſe conditions the circumſtances of places or perſons will not allow them to comply with.

Let us all then now go, with confidence in our great high prieſt who hath paſſed into the heavens, Jeſus the Son of God, to the throne of grace; that we may obtain mercy, and find grace in ſeaſonable aid. Heb. iv. 14. &c.

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